

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ABU DH 00672 131023Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----088211 131432Z /46

R 130750Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7493

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 0672

EXDIS

FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (ZAYID BIN SULTAN AL NAHAYYAN), TC
SUBJECT: TIMING OF STATE VISIT TO U.S. OF UAE PRESIDENT SHAIKH ZAYID

REF: ABU DHABI 0139

1. I REALIZE THAT WHITE HOUSE AND DEPARTMENT ARE FACED WITH NUMBER OF MATTERS OF MUCH GREATER MOMENT BUT I AM BECOMING INCREASINGLY CONCERNED OVER LACK OF REACTION TO PROPOSAL BY FONMIN SUWAIDI TO SCHEDULE SHAIKH ZAYID'S STATE VISIT TO U.S. IN FIRST WEEK OF JUNE 1978 (REFTEL). KNOWLEDGE OF PRESIDENT'S INVITATION TO ZAYID HAS BEGUN TO WIDEN WITHIN UAE AND I HAVE RECENTLY BEEN APPROACHED BY MINISTER OF PLANNING (AND FORMER AMBASSADOR TO US) SAID GHUBBASH, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER ADNAN PACHACHI, AND EVEN BY THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR, ALL OF WHOM HAVE TOLD ME THEY UNDERSTAND THAT TIMING FOR THE VISIT HAS BEEN "APPROVED IN THE LATTER PART OF JUNE." SPANISH AMBASSADOR RAISED SUBJECT WITH ME SINCE ZAYID IS CONSIDERING STATE VISIT TO MADRID IN JUNE, TIMING OF WHICH IS CONTINGENT UPON THAT OF ZAYID'S VISIT TO U.S. ON EACH OCCASION, I HAVE INDICATED TTQAT THERE HAS BEEN NO DATE YET SET FOR THE VISIT.

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2. MORE THAN FOUR MONTHS HAVE NOW PASSED SINCE UAE ACCEPTED THE PRESIDENT'S INVITATION AND TWO MONTHS SINCE UAE SUGGESTED JUNE DATE. SINCE ZAYID RETURNED FROM HIS ANNUAL VACATION IN PAKISTAN, I AM INFORMED THAT HE HAS EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN SEEING ME AND SUBJECT OF VISIT INEVITABLY WILL ARISE. THUS FAR,

I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO AVOID THIS MEETING BECAUSE ZAYID HAS BEEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE PREOCCUPIED IN NEXT WEEK OR TWO WITH NUMBER OF FOREIGN LEADERS WHO ARE DESCENDING ON ABU DHABI NOW THAT HE IS BACK. I DO NOT THINK THAT WE CAN POSTPONE MUCH LONGER, HOWEVER, PARTICULARLY IF ZAYID IS CONSIDERING THE SCHEDULING OF OTHER FOREIGN VISITS IN CONJUNCTION WITH ONE TO THE U.S.

3. I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT WE NOW HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO SCHEDULE STATE VISIT BY ZAYID DURING CY 78 AND THAT WE SHOULD ATTEMPT TO ACCOMMODATE HIS REQUEST FOR JUNE TIMING IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. IF, AS WE SURMISE, ADMINISTRATION'S PREOCCUPATION WITH MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS; ARMS SALES PACKAGE TO SAUDI ARABIA, EGYPT AND ISRAEL; PANAMA CANAL TREATY; ENERGY LEGISLATION; AND OTHER COMMITMENTS TO RECEIVE OR MEET WITH OTHER WORLD LEADERS MAKES VISIT BY ZAYID IN JUNE INCONVENIENT, THEN I SHOULD BE INFORMED AND AUTHORIZED TO TELL HIM SO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. I BELIEVE NO SERIOUS HARM WILL BE DONE IF WE MUST PROPOSE THAT STATE VISIT BE DEFERRED UNTIL LATER THIS YEAR PROVIDED WE DO NOT SUGGEST IT OCCUR DURING RAMADAN AND ID AL-FITR (AUGUST 3 - SEPT 12); ID AL-ADHA (NOV 9-16) OR UAE NATIONAL DAY (DEC 2) TIME FRAMES. HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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I SHOULD THEN BE FURNISHED WITH A PERSONAL MESSAGE FOR ZAYID FROM THE PRESIDENT EXPLAINING THE REASONS FOR A DEFERMENT UNTIL THE SECOND HALF OF 1978 TOGETHER WITH AN INDICATION OF ALTERNATIVE TIME FRAMES THAT WOULD BE CONVENIENT FOR THE WHITE HOUSE.

4. AGAIN, I STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT IN ANY CASE WITHIN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS GUIDANCE AS TO WHAT I CAN SAY SHOULD ZAYID SUMMOR ME TO TALK ABOUT PLANNING FOR A JUNE VISIT.
DICKMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ABUDH00672
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780111-0593
Format: TEL
From: ABU DHABI
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780377/aaaacnls.tel
Line Count: 106
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 945d74c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 ABU DHABI 139
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3357813
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TIMING OF STATE VISIT TO U.S. OF UAE PRESIDENT SHAIKH ZAYID
TAGS: OVIP, TC, (ZAYID BIN SULTAN AL NAHAYYAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/945d74c8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014